

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 AID-20 SR-02 ORM-03 IGA-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4581

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, BG, IN, PK

SUBJ: UN APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE IN RESETTLING SOUTH ASIAN REPATRIATES

REF: STATE 216539 OF 11/3/73

SUMMARY: UNDP RESIDENT REP IN PAKISTAN CALLED MEETING OF AID CONSORTIUM COUNTRIES APRIL 18 TO APPEAL FOR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO A UN-COORDINATED PROGRAM IN PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH FOR RESETTLEMENT OF SOUTH ASIAN REPATRIATES. WHILE THERE APPARENTLY IS AS YET NO SPECIAL BDG PROGRAM TO RESETTLE REPATRIATES, GOP HAS DRAFTED PROGRAM OF LONG-TERM INTEREST-FREE LOANS FOR HOUSING, SHOPS AND TOOLS TO SETTLE THEM IN AREAS NEAR JOB OPPORTUNITIES. HALF OF TOTAL PROGRAM COST WILL BE FOR HOUSING (\$10 MILLION US), AND UN REP PROPOSED THAT HALF OF THIS AMOUNT BE CONTRIBUTED BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. WHILE SEVERAL EMBASSY REPS ASKED FOR MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION RE SIZE AND NATURE OF PROGRAMS IN BOTH BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN, CANADIAN

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AMBASSADOR FELT HIS GOVERNMENT MIGHT AGREE TO \$300,000

TO EACH. IN VIEW REFTEL POSITION, USAID AND EMBASSY REPS REFRAINED FROM INDICATING ANY US SUPPORT TO RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM. IF UN DEVELOPS COORDINATED PROGRAM ACCEPTABLE TO OTHER DONORS, HOWEVER, PRESSURE ON US TO PARTICIPATE WILL INCREASE. END SUMMARY.

1. UNDP RESIDENT REP JANSSON INVITED AMBASSADORS REPRESENTING PAKISTAN AID CONSORTIUM COUNTRIES TO MEET APRIL 18 TO DISCUSS RESETTLEMENT OF SOUTH ASIAN (BANGALEE AND NON-BENGALEE) REPATRIATES WITH JAN ORNELD UN RESETTLEMENT

COORDINATOR FOR PAKISTAN. NO GOP REPS ATTENDED ALTHOUGH THEY HAD ENCOURAGED HOLDING OF MEETING AND HAD PROVIDED SEVERAL MEMORANDA GIVING OVERALL GOP STRATEGY AND SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FOR LOW-COST HOUSING PROJECT IN RAWALPINDI.

2. VARIOUS EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES RAISED QUESTIONS ABOUT BOTH THE LEADERSHIP FOR SUCH A COORDINATED EFFORT AND NATURE OF RESETTLEMENT PROBLEM. SEVERAL REPS SUGGESTED THAT PAKISTAN'S PROGRAM BE BALANCED BY SIMILAR ONE IN BANGLADESH AND THAT ENTIRE PROGRAM BE COORDINATED THROUGH UN. QUESTIONS UNANSWERED INCLUDED WHAT WAS BEING DONE IN BANGLADESH FOR BENGALLEES REPATRIATED FROM PAKISTAN, WHAT UN AGENCIES WERE OPERATING IN BANGLADESH AND AT WHAT LEVEL OF ACTIVITY, AND TOTAL NUMBER OF NON-BENGALEE REPATRIATES REQUIRING ASSISTANCE IN PAKISTAN.

3. JANSSON ARGUED FORCEFULLY THAT MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH WOULD BE PROGRAM COORDINATED BY SIR ROBERT JACKSON, PREPARED IN CONSULTATION WITH GOP AND BDG AND APPROVED BY NEW YORK. WITH REGARD NUMBERS, GOP HAD BEEN PLANNING SINCE SEPTEMBER 1973 ON BASIS OF HYPOTHETICAL 40,000 DESTITUTE NON-BENGALLEES. ORNER, HOWEVER, ESTIMATED TOTAL LIKELY TO REQUIRE RESETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE AT ABOUT 25,000, ALTHOUGH JANSSON EXPECTED THAT AN ADDITIONAL NUMBER MIGHT BE AGREED TO BY GOP WHEN BHUTTO ACTUALLY MEETS WITH MUJIB, PERHAPS NEXT MONTH.

4. UNDP REP REPORTED THAT OF THE APPROXIMATELY 80,000 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NON-BENGALLEES TRANSFERRED TO PAKISTAN WITH UNHCR ASSISTANCE UP TO 18 APRIL, ABOUT 2,940 FAMILIES HAD ARRIVED DESTITUTE AND HAD BEEN PUT IN RESETTLEMENT CAMPS BY GOP. EIGHT HUNDRED OF THESE FAMILIES HAVE SINCE LEFT CAMPS ON THEIR OWN. REMAINING APPEAR TO BE HARD-CORE HARDSHIP CASES. GOP EXPECTS BULK OF THE APPROXIMATELY 5,000 FAMILIES YET TO COME IN FOURTH CATEGORY WILL ALSO NEED GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE.

5. PRESENT GOP STRATEGY WAS TO ASSIMILATE REPATRIATES IN AREAS NEAR JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND EXTEND LONG-TERM INTEREST FREE LOANS FOR HOUSING AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT. GOP WAS PLANNING SMALL HOUSING PROJECTS IN AND NEAR URBAN AREAS IN PUNJAB, NWFP AND SIND AT ESTIMATED TOTAL COST OF 10 MILLION DOLLARS, HALF OF WHICH PAKS HOPED TO RECEIVE FROM INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. US REP AT MEETING, AID DIRECTOR WHEELER, WHILE SILENT ON POSSIBILITY OF USG ASSISTANCE, EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM OF HOUSING PROJECTS ON GROUNDS THEY WOULD SET REFUGEES APART RATHER THAN INTEGRATE THEM INTO SOCIETY, AS INTENDED. CANADIAN, JAPANESE AND OTHER REPS EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BANGLADESH AND PRESSED FOR EFFICIENT UN COORDINATION OF ENTIRE PROGRAM. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR INDICATED THAT HIS COUNTRY WAS CONSIDERING GRANT OF APPROXIMATELY \$300,000 EACH FOR PAK AND BANGLADESH PROGRAMS. JANSSON SAID INDIVIDUAL APPROACHES WOULD BE MADE TO NON-CONSORTIUM COUNTRIES.

6. ON APRIL 25 UNDP INFORMED EMBASSY THAT THERE WAS AS YET NO BDG MACHINERY TO RESETTLE REPATRIATES FROM PAKISTAN, MOST OF WHOM WERE FORMER PAK CIVILIAN AND MILITARY EMPLOYEES. JANSSON SUGGESTED THAT GOVERNMENTS CONSIDERING CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE ONE-HALF AVAILABLE TO UNDP-ASSISTED GOP PROGRAM AND THAT OTHER HALF BE SUBJECT OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH BDG WHEN IT DEVELOPS RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM FOR ITS REPATRIATES.
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